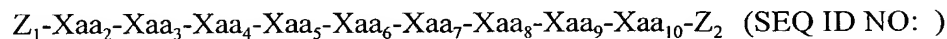


We claim:

1. A polypeptide having the retroinverso form of a polypeptide of formula (I)

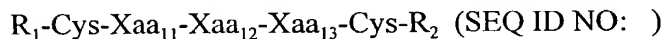


wherein:

- Xaa₂ is a neutral/non-polar/large/cyclic amino acid residue;
- Xaa₃ is a neutral/polar/small or neutral/polar/ large/non-cyclic or acidic amino acid residue;
- Xaa₄ is a neutral/nonpolar/large/cyclic or neutral/non-polar/large/non-cyclic or neutral/polar/large/non-cyclic or neutral/ polar/small amino acid residue;
- Xaa₅ is a neutral/polar/small amino acid residue
- Xaa₆ is a neutral/polar/small or neutral/polar/ large/non-cyclic amino acid residue;
- Xaa₇ is a neutral/nonpolar/large/non-cyclic or neutral/polar/large/non-cyclic amino acid residue;
- Xaa₈ is a neutral/polar/large/non-cyclic or neutral/polar/small amino acid residue;
- Xaa₉ is a neutral/polar/small amino acid residue;
- Xaa₁₀ is a neutral/polar/small amino acid residue;
- Z₁ is hydrogen, amino, acetyl or at least one amino acid residue or the desamino form thereof;
- Z₂ is hydroxyl, carboxyl, non-amino acids such as agmatine, or at least one amino acid residue, including carboxamide or alkylamide forms thereof; and

wherein said polypeptide mimics or inhibits the biological activity of thrombospondin.

2. A polypeptide having the retroinverso form of a polypeptide of formula (II):



wherein:

- R_1 is a protected or unprotected terminal amino group, including hydrogen, amino, acetyl or at least one amino acid residue or the desamino form thereof;
- Xaa_{11} , Xaa_{12} , and Xaa_{13} are the same or different neutral/non-polar/large/non-cyclic or neutral/polar/large/non-cyclic or neutral/polar/small or basic/non-cyclic amino acid residues, preferably selected from the group consisting of valine, threonine, serine, and arginine;
- R_2 is a protected or unprotected terminal carboxyl group including hydroxyl, carboxyl, or at least one amino acid residue, including carboxamide or alkylamide forms thereof, preferably selected from the group consisting of lysine, glycine, and arginine;

wherein the structure of the polypeptide is optionally cyclized through a bond between the cysteines, such as a disulfide bond, or a bond between R_1 and R_2 ; and

wherein said polypeptide mimics or inhibits the biological activity of thrombospondin.

3. The retroinverso polypeptide according to claim 2, wherein the cysteine residues are modified by a sulphydryl blocking group.
4. A retroinverso polypeptide having the formula d-Gly-Cys-Thr-Val-Ser-Cys (SEQ ID NO:), wherein the cysteine residues are modified with a sulphydryl blocking group.
5. The retroinverso polypeptide according to claim 4, wherein the sulphydryl blocking group is $-\text{CH}_2\text{-NH-COCH}_3$.

8. The polypeptide according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the polypeptide is linked to an radioisotope.

9. The polypeptide according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the polypeptide is linked to a cytotoxic agent.

11. The polypeptide according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the polypeptide is linked to a compound selected from the group consisting of human serum albumin, dextran, and covalently substituted poly-L-glutamic acid.

12. A method for inhibiting tumor cell metastasis comprising administering to a host in need of such inhibition an effective amount of a retroinverso polypeptide compound according to any one of claims 1 to 5.

- 75 -

14. A method for inhibiting tumor cell adhesion comprising administering to a host in need of such inhibition an effective amount of a retroinverso polypeptide according to any one of claims 1 to 5.